NEW BRUNSWICK DECKS

Permits & Building Codes

Questions about NB building permits, code requirements, inspections, and regulations for deck construction.

16 Expert Answers from Deck IQ

newbrunswickdecks.com/construction-brain

Table of Contents

Q1

What are the inspection fees for deck construction in Fredericton NB?

Building permit fees in Fredericton typically range from $150-$300 for residential deck construction, which includes the required inspections. The exact fee depends on the deck's size, complexity, and estimated construction value.

Fredericton requires building permits for any deck that's attached to your house or elevated more than 600mm (24 inches) above finished grade. The permit fee covers both the plan review process and the mandatory inspections during construction.

The inspection process in Fredericton involves two key stages. First, there's a footing inspection that must happen after you've dug and formed your footings but before pouring concrete. This ensures your footings extend below the required 1.2-meter frost depth for the Fredericton area and meet structural requirements. Second, there's a final inspection once construction is complete to verify the deck meets all Building Code requirements including proper ledger attachment, structural connections, and railing specifications.

You'll need to schedule these inspections in advance — typically 24-48 hours notice is required. The City of Fredericton's building inspection department handles all residential deck permits and inspections. If an inspection fails, you'll need to correct the issues and schedule a re-inspection, which may involve additional fees.

For current exact fees and to apply for your permit, contact the City of Fredericton's Planning and Development Services department directly. Permit fees are based on the estimated construction value of your project, so a simple 10x12 pressure-treated deck will cost less in permit fees than a large multi-level composite deck. The permit application requires basic drawings showing dimensions, materials, and structural details.

Don't skip the permit process — unpermitted deck work can cause issues when selling your home and may not be covered by insurance if problems arise. Plus, the inspection process helps ensure your deck is built safely to handle New Brunswick's heavy snow loads and freeze-thaw cycles.

Need help finding a qualified deck builder who's familiar with Fredericton's permit process? New Brunswick Decks can match you with local contractors who handle permits and inspections as part of their service.

Q2

What happens if I build a deck without a permit in New Brunswick?

Building a deck without a required permit in New Brunswick exposes you to stop-work orders, fines of up to $5,200 per offence under the Community Planning Act, mandatory demolition orders, and serious complications when you sell your property. The consequences extend well beyond the initial fine and can follow you for years.

New Brunswick municipalities enforce building permits through their local building inspection departments, and the consequences escalate depending on when the unpermitted work is discovered and how cooperative the property owner is. The most immediate risk is a stop-work order. If a building inspector or bylaw enforcement officer identifies unpermitted construction in progress, they will issue an order requiring all work to cease immediately. Continuing construction after a stop-work order is a separate offence that carries additional penalties.

The financial penalties under the New Brunswick Community Planning Act are meaningful. Section 190 allows municipalities to impose fines of up to $5,200 for individuals and higher amounts for corporations for violations of the building bylaw. Each day that a violation continues can be treated as a separate offence, so the fines can accumulate quickly if a homeowner refuses to comply. In practice, most municipalities in New Brunswick, including Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John, prefer to bring property owners into compliance rather than pursue maximum penalties, but they have the legal authority to escalate.

The compliance process for an already-built unpermitted deck is more disruptive than most homeowners expect. The municipality will typically require you to apply for a permit retroactively, which involves submitting the same drawings and specifications that would have been required before construction. A building inspector will then examine the existing structure, but since the footings, framing, and connections are already concealed or completed, they often cannot verify critical structural elements. This frequently results in requirements to expose hidden work by removing decking boards to inspect joists, digging around footings to verify depth, or even removing skirting to assess post connections. If the inspector finds code violations, and unpermitted decks very commonly have them, you must correct every deficiency before the permit can be closed.

The most common code violations found in unpermitted New Brunswick decks include footings that do not reach the frost line of 48 to 60 inches, ledger boards attached with nails instead of through-bolts or lag screws, inadequate or missing joist hangers, railing heights below the required 42 inches for decks more than 24 inches above grade, and baluster spacing exceeding the maximum 4 inches. A nailed ledger board is particularly dangerous because it is a leading cause of deck collapse across North America, and inspectors treat this as a critical life-safety deficiency requiring immediate correction.

The real estate consequences are often the most costly in the long run. When you sell your property, the buyer's lawyer will check municipal records for outstanding permits and code compliance. An unpermitted deck will appear as either a missing permit or an open permit file, both of which can delay or derail a sale. Buyers may demand a price reduction of $10,000 to $20,000 or more, or require the deck be brought into compliance before closing. Title

insurance may cover some scenarios, but policies vary and the coverage is not guaranteed.

Home insurance is another vulnerability. If an unpermitted deck fails and causes injury or property damage, your insurer may deny the claim on the grounds that the structure was not built to code and was never inspected. This leaves you personally liable for medical costs, property damage, and legal fees.

The permit itself typically costs between $50 and $300 depending on the municipality and deck size, which is insignificant compared to the potential consequences. For most residential decks in New Brunswick, the permit process takes 1 to 3 weeks and requires a site plan, construction drawings, and one or two inspections during construction.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- Worry No More Handyman Services ?
- Eastbound Homes ?
- Hickory Dickory Decks Moncton ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q3

Can I build a deck in a flood-prone area of Saint John NB?

Yes, you can build a deck in a flood-prone area of Saint John, but you must comply with both the municipal flood risk zoning bylaws and provincial wetland and watercourse regulations, which impose significant restrictions on construction within designated flood zones. The process is more complex and expensive than building on a standard residential lot, and certain flood-risk designations may prohibit permanent structures altogether.

Saint John has well-documented flood risk areas, particularly along the Saint John River and Marsh Creek corridors, as well as low-lying neighbourhoods in the city's south end and areas around Millidgeville. The city's zoning bylaw includes flood risk overlay zones that restrict construction activity. If your property falls within a designated floodway, which is the area of deepest and fastest-moving water during a flood event, new permanent structures including decks are generally prohibited. If your property is within the flood fringe, which experiences

shallower and slower-moving floodwater, construction may be permitted provided the structure meets specific elevation and flood-proofing requirements.

The first step is determining your property's exact flood zone classification. Saint John's planning department maintains flood risk mapping, and you can request a flood risk determination as part of a development permit application. This typically costs between $50 and $150 for the application fee and may take 2 to 4 weeks for review. You should also check whether your property is subject to the New Brunswick Watercourse and Wetland Alteration Regulation, which requires a separate provincial permit from the Department of Environment and Local Government for any construction within 30 metres of a watercourse or wetland.

For properties where deck construction is permitted in flood fringe areas, several design adaptations are typically required. The deck structure should be elevated above the designated flood construction level (FCL), which is the 1-in-100-year flood elevation plus a 0.3-metre freeboard. This often means using taller posts on deep footings rather than ground-level platform designs. Footings must be engineered to resist both frost heave, which requires a minimum 48-inch depth in Saint John, and the lateral forces and scour effects of floodwater. Helical piles are often preferred over poured concrete footings in flood-prone areas because they resist uplift and lateral movement more effectively.

Material and Design Considerations

Material selection matters significantly in flood zones. Pressure-treated lumber rated for ground contact is essential for any components that may be submerged. Modern MCA (micronized copper azole) pressure-treated lumber is safe and effective for this purpose, as the arsenic-containing CCA treatment was phased out of residential use in 2004. Stainless steel or hot-dipped galvanized hardware should be used throughout, as repeated water exposure accelerates corrosion on standard zinc-plated connectors. Composite decking handles repeated wetting and drying better than wood in terms of dimensional stability, though the substructure will still be pressure-treated lumber.

Insurance implications are substantial. Building any structure in a designated flood zone can affect your property insurance premiums and coverage terms. Some insurers may refuse to cover flood damage to structures built in high-risk zones, even if the municipality granted a permit. Discuss this with your insurance provider before committing to construction.

Budget realistically for the added costs. Between the permit process, engineering requirements, deeper foundations, and premium materials, building a deck in a Saint John flood zone typically costs 30 to 50 percent more than an equivalent deck on a standard lot. A 200-square-foot deck that might cost $8,000 to $12,000 on a standard lot could run $12,000 to $18,000 or more in a flood-prone area.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- R.e.j Construction ?
- Duguay Construction ?
- Hickory Dickory Decks Moncton ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q4

What are the NB building code requirements for deck beam spans?

New Brunswick follows the National Building Code of Canada (NBCC) for deck beam span requirements, which dictate maximum distances based on species, grade, beam size, and tributary load width. Understanding these spans is essential because undersized beams are one of the most common structural failures in residential decks, leading to sagging, bounce, and in severe cases, collapse.

For most residential decks in New Brunswick, builders use Spruce-Pine-Fir (SPF) lumber, which is the dominant softwood species available from local mills and building suppliers across the province. A doubled 2x8 SPF No. 2 beam supporting a typical 12-foot joist span can span approximately 6 to 7 feet between posts, while a doubled 2x10 of the same grade extends that to roughly 8 to 9 feet. Moving up to a doubled 2x12 allows spans approaching 10 to 11 feet under similar loading conditions. These figures assume the standard residential deck live load of 40 pounds per square foot (psf) plus 10 psf dead load, totalling 50 psf combined, which is the baseline requirement under the NBCC for areas intended for assembly or habitation.

Tributary width is the critical variable most homeowners overlook. The tributary width is essentially how much deck area each beam is responsible for supporting. A beam carrying joists that cantilever only 2 feet past it has a much smaller tributary load than one positioned at the centre of a 16-foot joist span. As tributary width increases, allowable beam span decreases proportionally. A doubled 2x10 that can span 9 feet with a 6-foot tributary width might only span 6.5 feet when the tributary width increases to 10 feet.

New Brunswick's climate adds another layer of consideration. The province falls within significant snow load zones, particularly in the northern and central regions around Edmundston and Fredericton, where ground snow loads can exceed 3.0 kPa. Decks that are covered or partially enclosed may need to account for snow accumulation as an additional dead load, which further reduces allowable beam spans. Uncovered decks generally shed snow, so the standard 40 psf live load plus 10 psf dead load typically governs the design.

Post spacing is the practical outcome of beam span calculations. If your design requires a 14-foot beam run but your lumber choice only allows a 7-foot span, you need a minimum of three posts, creating two equal spans. Posts must sit on footings that extend below the frost line, which in most of New Brunswick is 48 to 60 inches depending on the municipality. Undersized footings paired with overspanned beams compound the problem, as the concentrated loads at each post bearing point can exceed the soil's bearing capacity.

For decks supporting hot tubs or other concentrated loads, the standard beam span tables are insufficient. A hot tub filled with water and occupants can impose 75 to 100 psf, roughly double the normal residential deck load. This typically requires engineered beam designs with closer post spacing, often 3 to 4 feet, and potentially steel beams or tripled lumber configurations.

When submitting permit applications in New Brunswick municipalities like Moncton, Fredericton, or Saint John, building officials expect beam span calculations to reference the NBCC span tables or be supported by an engineer's stamp. Provincial inspectors will verify beam sizes and post spacing during the framing inspection before decking is installed. Getting this right at the design stage avoids costly teardowns and redesigns.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- Duguay Construction ?
- Hickory Dickory Decks Moncton ?
- Worry No More Handyman Services ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q5

What snow load rating does the NB building code require for deck construction?

The New Brunswick Building Code requires deck structures to be designed for snow loads ranging from 2.0 kPa in the southern part of the province to 3.5 kPa in northern regions. This is a significant structural consideration that directly affects the sizing of every load-bearing component in your deck, from footings and posts to beams and joists.

Snow load values in New Brunswick vary geographically because the province experiences substantially different snowfall accumulations from south to north. Communities in the southern part of the province, including Moncton, Saint John, Fredericton, and their surrounding areas, generally fall within the 2.0 to 2.5 kPa range. As you move into the central and northern parts of the province toward communities like Bathurst, Edmundston, and Campbellton, the design snow load increases to 3.0 kPa and above, reaching 3.5 kPa in the most snow-prone northern areas. The NB Building Code adopts the National Building Code of Canada and references the climatic data tables that assign specific snow load values to individual communities based on historical snowfall records and statistical analysis.

To put these numbers in practical terms, a snow load of 2.0 kPa means that every square metre of your deck must be able to support approximately 200 kilograms of snow weight. For a modest 20-square-metre deck in Moncton,

that translates to a total snow load of roughly 4,000 kilograms distributed across the deck surface. At 3.5 kPa in northern New Brunswick, the same deck would need to support approximately 7,000 kilograms of snow. These are substantial loads that must be carried through the joists to the beams, down the posts, and into the footings, and every component in that load path must be sized to handle not just the snow load but the combined effect of all loads acting simultaneously, including the dead load of the deck materials themselves and the live load from occupants and furniture.

The snow load requirement has direct implications for how you design and build your deck. Joist and beam spans that are perfectly adequate for a deck in a region with minimal snow may be insufficient in New Brunswick. The NB Building Code span tables account for these loads, and when you select beam sizes and joist spacing from the tables, you must use the values corresponding to the snow load for your specific location. Using span tables from other provinces or from American sources without adjusting for New Brunswick's snow loads is a common mistake that can result in undersized structural members.

How Snow Load Affects Deck Design Decisions

Footings deserve particular attention in the context of New Brunswick's snow loads. The combined dead load, live load, and snow load determines the total bearing pressure that each footing must transfer to the soil. In areas with higher snow loads, you may need larger footing diameters or additional footings with closer post spacing to keep the bearing pressure within the capacity of your soil type. This is especially relevant on sites with softer soils such as clay or fill, where the allowable bearing capacity is lower. The footings must also extend below the frost line, which ranges from 1.2 metres in southern New Brunswick to 1.5 metres in the north, ensuring that the heavier loads from snow accumulation are transferred to stable, unfrozen ground.

If your deck design involves long spans, cantilevered sections, or any configuration that falls outside the prescriptive span tables, engineered drawings are required. The engineer will use the specific snow load value for your municipality in their calculations and will size each member to provide an adequate safety factor above the minimum code requirements.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- Duguay Construction ?
- Eastbound Homes ?
- Hickory Dickory Decks Moncton ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q6

Do I need a separate electrical permit for deck lighting in New Brunswick?

Yes, you need a separate electrical permit for permanent deck lighting in New Brunswick. The electrical permit is independent of your building permit for the deck structure itself, and it must be obtained before any permanent wiring is installed.

The distinction between permanent and temporary lighting is the key factor. If you are installing hard-wired light fixtures, running electrical cable through or along the deck structure, adding weatherproof outlets, or connecting any permanent electrical components, an electrical permit is required. This applies to recessed post cap lights, stair riser lights, soffit-mounted fixtures under pergolas or roof extensions, and any receptacle installed on or near the deck. Low-voltage landscape lighting systems that plug into a standard outdoor receptacle using a transformer are generally treated differently from line-voltage installations, but the receptacle they plug into still needs to have been installed under a proper electrical permit if it was not part of the original house wiring.

The electrical permit process in New Brunswick involves submitting an application that describes the scope of the electrical work, including the number and type of fixtures, the circuit routing, the panel capacity, and the protective devices. The work must be performed by a licensed electrician or, in some cases, by the homeowner if they obtain a homeowner electrical permit, though the rules around homeowner electrical work vary and come with significant responsibility for meeting code requirements. All electrical work is subject to inspection by an electrical inspector before the circuits are energized and concealed.

One of the most important code requirements for deck electrical installations is the GFCI protection mandate. Any receptacle or fixture located within 1.5 metres of the deck must be protected by a ground fault circuit interrupter. GFCI protection is essential for outdoor installations because moisture, rain, snow, and condensation create conditions where electrical current can find unintended paths to ground through a person's body. The GFCI device detects these ground faults and shuts off power within milliseconds, preventing serious electrical shock. This requirement applies not just to receptacles on the deck itself but also to any existing outdoor receptacles on the house wall that fall within 1.5 metres of the deck surface once the deck is constructed.

The electrical permit fee is separate from and in addition to the building permit fee for the deck structure. While the building permit typically costs $100 to $300, the electrical permit has its own fee schedule based on the scope of work. Both permits must be obtained before their respective construction activities begin, but they are processed through different channels. The building permit goes through your municipal building department, while the

electrical permit is processed through the electrical inspection authority.

Planning the electrical work before you begin building the deck structure is strongly advisable. Running electrical cable is much easier before the decking boards are installed, when the joist cavities are accessible. If you plan the electrical layout in advance, your electrician can install conduit or cable runs during the framing stage, threading wires through joists and posts before everything is closed up with decking material. Trying to add permanent wiring after the deck is fully built often means surface-mounted conduit, which is less attractive and more exposed to physical damage.

Building the deck without the required electrical permit and having an unlicensed person perform the wiring carries serious consequences beyond fines. Faulty outdoor electrical work poses genuine fire and shock hazards, and insurance companies routinely deny claims arising from unpermitted electrical installations. If an incident occurs involving improperly installed deck lighting, the liability implications for the homeowner are substantial.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- Larmondin Carpentry ?
- Worry No More Handyman Services ?
- Eastbound Homes ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q7

How long does it take to get a deck permit approved in Moncton NB?

A deck building permit in Moncton typically takes 2 to 4 weeks to be approved from the date of a complete submission to the Building Inspection Division. The actual timeline depends heavily on the completeness and quality of your application, the complexity of the project, and the current workload at the building department.

The most important factor in achieving a fast approval is submitting a complete application on the first attempt. The Building Inspection Division reviews your submission for both zoning compliance and building code compliance. On the zoning side, they verify that your proposed deck respects the required property line setbacks, which typically range from 1 to 3 metres in Moncton's residential zones, and that the deck does not push your total lot coverage beyond the permitted maximum for your zoning district. On the building code side, they review your construction drawings to ensure that the structural design complies with the New Brunswick Building Code, including footing depth, member sizing, connection details, and guard specifications.

Incomplete applications are the single most common cause of delays. If your drawings are missing critical information such as footing depths, beam span details, joist spacing, or railing height specifications, the Building Inspection Division will return your application with a request for additional information. Each round of revisions and resubmission can add 1 to 2 weeks to your timeline. To avoid this, make sure your drawings clearly show footings extending to the minimum 1.2-metre frost depth required in the Moncton area, beam and joist sizes that fall within the NB Building Code span tables, post-to-beam and joist-to-beam connection hardware, ledger board attachment details if the deck is attached to the house, and guard heights of at least 1,070 millimetres with baluster spacing no greater than 100 millimetres.

The complexity of your project also affects approval time. A straightforward rectangular deck at the back of the house with standard framing is the fastest to review and approve. Multi-level decks, decks with extensive stair systems, decks designed to support hot tubs or other heavy loads, and decks in unusual locations such as flood zones or steep slopes require more detailed review and may need engineered drawings, which adds time both for the engineering work and for the more thorough plan review that follows.

Seasonal demand plays a role as well. Permit applications spike in late winter and early spring as homeowners prepare for the construction season. Submitting your application in January or February, before the spring rush, can result in faster turnaround than submitting in April or May when the Building Inspection Division is processing a higher volume of applications. The permit fee itself is typically in the $100 to $300 range, paid at the time of submission.

Once your permit is approved and issued, it is valid for a set period, usually 12 months, during which you must commence construction. If you do not start within that window, the permit may expire and you would need to

reapply. After starting construction, you are required to schedule three inspections with the Building Inspection Division at the footing stage, the framing stage, and the final completion stage. Each inspection should be requested at least 24 to 48 hours in advance to ensure timely scheduling and to avoid unnecessary delays in your construction timeline.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- R.e.j Construction ?
- Larmondin Carpentry ?
- Eastbound Homes ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q8

Do I need engineered drawings for a deck permit in Fredericton NB?

Engineered drawings are not required for most standard single-level residential decks in Fredericton, but they become mandatory for multi-level decks, decks designed to support heavy loads such as hot tubs, and decks with unusual spans or complex structural configurations. The Fredericton Development Officer's office makes this determination based on the specifics of your project during the permit application review.

For a conventional single-level deck that uses standard lumber sizes, follows the beam and joist span tables published in the New Brunswick Building Code, and does not carry any extraordinary loads, you can typically submit your own construction drawings as part of the permit application. These drawings need to show the complete structural system including footing locations and depths, post sizes and heights, beam sizes and spans, joist sizes and spacing, decking direction and material, ledger board attachment details, guard and handrail specifications, and stair construction details. The drawings must demonstrate that every component falls within the allowable spans and load capacities set out in the NB Building Code span tables. If your drawings clearly demonstrate code compliance and the deck is a simple rectangular or L-shaped design, the Development Officer will generally approve them without requiring a professional engineer's stamp.

The situation changes when your deck moves beyond standard parameters. A multi-level deck with one section significantly higher than another introduces more complex load paths, and the connections between levels must be engineered to handle the combined forces properly. Similarly, if you plan to place a hot tub on your deck, the concentrated load of a filled hot tub with occupants can easily exceed 3,000 kilograms, which is far beyond what standard residential deck framing is designed to support. The footings, posts, beams, and joists in the hot tub area all need to be specifically designed for that load, and this requires a structural engineer's calculations and stamped drawings.

Decks with unusual spans also trigger the engineered drawing requirement. If your design calls for a beam span that exceeds what the NB Building Code span tables cover, or if you want to use fewer but larger posts with longer beam spans for aesthetic reasons, the structural adequacy of those members needs to be confirmed through engineering calculations. Cantilevers beyond the code-prescribed maximums, angled or curved deck sections, and decks built on slopes where posts of significantly different heights create unbalanced lateral forces are other common situations where engineering is required.

The cost of engineered drawings in New Brunswick typically ranges from $500 to $1,500 depending on the complexity of the project. While this adds to the overall project cost, it provides a level of assurance that the structure will perform safely under all expected loads, including the significant snow loads that New Brunswick experiences. In the Fredericton area, the design snow load is approximately 2.0 kPa, meaning every square metre of your deck must be able to support roughly 200 kilograms of snow accumulation in addition to all other live and dead loads. An engineer's calculations account for these combined load scenarios and ensure that the structural members are sized appropriately.

If you are uncertain whether your project requires engineered drawings, the most efficient approach is to contact the Development Officer's office in Fredericton before investing time in detailed drawings. They can review your preliminary plans and advise whether a standard submission will be accepted or whether you need to engage a structural engineer.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- Eastbound Homes ?
- Worry No More Handyman Services ?
- Larmondin Carpentry ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q9

What are the property line setback rules for decks in Bathurst NB?

Property line setback rules for decks in Bathurst generally require a minimum distance of 1 to 3 metres from the deck edge to the property boundary, with the specific distance determined by your zoning district and which yard the deck occupies. These setback requirements are part of Bathurst's municipal zoning bylaw and are enforced during the building permit review process.

In most residential zones in Bathurst, rear yard setbacks for accessory structures including decks tend to be the most accommodating, typically requiring a minimum of 1 to 1.5 metres from the rear property line. Side yard setbacks are usually slightly more restrictive, often in the range of 1.2 to 2 metres, and front yard setbacks are the most restrictive, generally requiring the deck to sit behind the established building line for the street. Corner lots present a unique challenge because they have frontage on two streets, and the flanking side yard setback is typically treated more like a front yard setback than a standard side yard, which can significantly limit where you can place a deck.

The setback is measured from the nearest edge of the deck structure to the property line, and this includes stairs, landings, and any cantilevered portions of the deck. If your deck has stairs that descend toward a side property line, the bottom of those stairs including the landing pad must still respect the side yard setback. Overhanging roof structures or pergolas attached to the deck may also factor into the setback calculation depending on how Bathurst's zoning bylaw treats projections into required yards.

Bathurst's zoning bylaw also establishes maximum lot coverage percentages, which limit how much of your total lot area can be covered by structures including decks. This is separate from the setback requirement and can become the limiting factor on smaller lots where the setback distances are easily met but the combined footprint of the house, garage, driveway, and proposed deck approaches or exceeds the permitted lot coverage.

Before submitting a building permit application, you should confirm your exact property boundaries. Many homeowners rely on assumptions about where their property line is, based on fence lines or hedges that may not accurately reflect the legal boundary. An existing survey certificate from when you purchased the property is usually sufficient, but if none is available or if boundary locations are in dispute, commissioning a new survey from a licensed New Brunswick land surveyor is the safest approach. Building a deck that encroaches on a neighbouring property or violates a setback creates legal and practical problems that are expensive to resolve after the fact.

If your property's dimensions or shape make it impossible to build a deck within the standard setback requirements, you may have the option of applying for a variance through Bathurst's planning process. A variance is a formal request for permission to deviate from the zoning rules due to a hardship created by the specific characteristics of your property. The variance process involves notification of adjacent property owners, an opportunity for objections,

and a decision by the planning authority, which can add several weeks to your project timeline.

The building permit fee in Bathurst falls in the typical New Brunswick range of $100 to $300, and the approval process generally takes 2 to 4 weeks assuming your application is complete and meets all zoning and building code requirements.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- R.e.j Construction ?
- Duguay Construction ?
- Hickory Dickory Decks Moncton ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q10

What is the maximum deck height before a permit is required in Riverview NB?

In Riverview, a building permit is generally required for any deck that is more than 600 millimetres above finished grade or that is attached to the house. The 600-millimetre threshold is the standard used across New Brunswick under the provincial building code, and Riverview applies this same standard through its municipal building inspection process.

The 600-millimetre measurement is taken from the top of the deck surface to the lowest point of the adjacent finished grade. This is an important distinction because many properties in Riverview have varying terrain, and a deck that appears low on one side may be considerably higher on another. If any portion of the deck exceeds the 600-millimetre height at any point around its perimeter, the entire structure falls under the permit requirement. You cannot claim an exemption based on the average height or the height on the side closest to the house.

It is equally important to understand that the height threshold is only one of two triggers for a permit requirement. The second trigger is whether the deck is attached to the house. A deck that is bolted to the house using a ledger board requires a permit regardless of its height above grade, even if the deck surface sits only 150 millimetres off the ground. The structural connection between the deck and the house creates load transfer conditions that must be verified through the permit and inspection process to ensure the house framing can safely support the additional loads and that the connection is detailed correctly to prevent water damage and structural failure.

For a freestanding deck in Riverview that genuinely sits below 600 millimetres above grade at all points and has no structural attachment to the house, you may be exempt from the building permit requirement. However, this exemption does not release you from complying with the New Brunswick Building Code in terms of construction standards, nor does it exempt you from municipal zoning requirements. You still need to respect property line setbacks, which typically range from 1 to 3 metres in Riverview's residential zones, and you must not interfere with drainage, utility easements, or lot coverage maximums.

The consequences of building a deck above the 600-millimetre threshold without a permit are significant. Fines under New Brunswick's building code enforcement provisions range from $500 to $5,000 per offence. Beyond fines, an unpermitted deck can create serious problems when you sell your property, as home inspectors and real estate lawyers routinely flag structures that lack building permits. Your homeowner's insurance may also deny claims related to an unpermitted deck, whether for personal injury from a structural failure or property damage from water infiltration caused by an improperly installed ledger.

If your deck is close to the 600-millimetre threshold, the practical advice is to either design it to sit clearly below 600 millimetres at all points with a freestanding foundation system, or accept that a permit is needed and go through the process. The permit fee in the $100 to $300 range is a small investment compared to the potential costs of building

without one. When in doubt, contact Riverview's building inspection office for a definitive answer on your specific situation before you begin construction.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- R.e.j Construction ?
- Hickory Dickory Decks Moncton ?
- Eastbound Homes ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q11

What inspections are required when building a deck in Moncton NB?

When building a permitted deck in Moncton, three inspections are required: a footing inspection, a framing inspection, and a final inspection. These inspections are conducted by the Building Inspection Division and must be scheduled by the homeowner or contractor at each stage before work proceeds to the next phase.

The footing inspection is the first and arguably the most critical. Before you pour concrete into your sonotube forms or set precast footings, the building inspector needs to verify that the holes are dug to the correct depth and that the footing dimensions meet the specifications on your approved drawings. In Moncton and the surrounding southern New Brunswick region, the minimum frost depth is 1.2 metres, meaning your footings must extend at least that far below finished grade to prevent frost heave from shifting or lifting your deck structure over winter freeze-thaw cycles. The inspector will also confirm that the footing locations correspond to your approved site plan and that the soil conditions at the bottom of each hole are adequate to support the loads specified in your design. If you are building on fill or encountering soft or waterlogged soil, the inspector may require modifications such as larger footing pads or compacted granular base material beneath the footings.

The framing inspection takes place after your posts, beams, joists, and decking are installed but before you complete the railings, stairs, and any finishing work. At this stage, the inspector verifies that the structural members match the sizes and species specified in your permit drawings and that they comply with the span tables referenced in the New Brunswick Building Code. Post-to-beam connections, joist hangers, beam splices, and the ledger board

connection to the house are all closely examined. The ledger connection is a particular focus because failures at this point are the most common cause of catastrophic deck collapses. The inspector confirms that the ledger is properly bolted through the house rim joist with the correct size and spacing of lag screws or through-bolts, and that appropriate flashing is installed to prevent water infiltration behind the ledger.

The final inspection occurs once all construction is complete, including guards, handrails, stair stringers, treads, and any other components. Guards must be a minimum of 1,070 millimetres high on decks that are more than 600 millimetres above grade, and the spacing between balusters cannot exceed 100 millimetres to prevent children from passing through. Stair risers must be uniform in height, and handrails must be graspable with a profile that allows a secure grip. The inspector also checks that the completed structure matches the approved drawings and that no unauthorized changes were made during construction.

Scheduling inspections in Moncton is done through the Building Inspection Division. You typically need to call at least 24 to 48 hours in advance, and inspections are usually conducted within a few business days of the request. It is important not to proceed past an inspection point before receiving approval. If you backfill footings before the footing inspection, for example, the inspector may require you to excavate them for visual verification, adding cost and delay to your project. Passing all three inspections results in a final sign-off on your permit, which you should retain with your property records as proof of code-compliant construction.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- R.e.j Construction ?
- Hickory Dickory Decks Moncton ?
- Eastbound Homes ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q12

What setback requirements apply to decks in Saint John NB?

Decks in Saint John are generally subject to setback requirements of 1 to 3 metres from property lines, with the exact distance depending on your specific zoning designation and whether the deck is in a front,

side, or rear yard. These setbacks are enforced through Saint John's zoning bylaw and are verified during the building permit review process.

In Saint John, all deck permit applications are processed through OneStop, the city's centralized development services office. When you submit your application, OneStop staff review your site plan against the applicable zoning district rules. Rear yard setbacks for decks are typically the most lenient, often requiring a minimum of 1 metre from the rear property line, while side yard setbacks may range from 1.2 to 3 metres depending on the zone. Front yard setbacks are generally the most restrictive and are measured from the street line or the established building line for your block, whichever applies. Corner lots have additional considerations because they have two frontages, and the setback from the flanking street side is usually greater than a standard side yard requirement.

It is important to understand that in Saint John, the setback applies to the outermost edge of the deck structure, not just the posts or the point where the deck meets the house. If your deck includes stairs descending into the yard, those stairs and their landing also count toward the setback calculation. Any portion of the deck that encroaches into the required setback will be flagged during review and must be revised before a permit is issued.

Saint John also has specific considerations for properties in flood-prone areas, particularly in neighbourhoods along the Saint John River and its tributaries. If your property falls within a designated flood zone, you may face additional requirements including elevation certificates and minimum deck heights relative to established flood levels. These properties may also have restrictions on the type of foundation or footing system used, since footings in flood zones must resist both frost heave at the NB-required depth of 1.2 metres in southern New Brunswick and potential hydrostatic pressure from rising water tables.

For homeowners who are unsure about their exact property boundaries, it is strongly advisable to have a survey completed before submitting your permit application. Building a deck that unknowingly encroaches on a neighbouring property or violates a setback requirement can result in an order to remove the encroaching portion, fines between $500 and $5,000 under the New Brunswick Building Code enforcement provisions, and complications if you later try to sell the property. Title insurance does not typically cover structures built without permits or in violation of known setback rules.

If your proposed deck cannot meet the standard setback requirements due to an irregularly shaped lot or other hardship, you may apply for a variance through Saint John's planning process. Variance applications require notice to adjacent property owners and are decided by the planning advisory committee, which adds several weeks to the overall approval timeline beyond the standard 2 to 4 weeks for a straightforward permit.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- R.e.j Construction ?
- Eastbound Homes ?
- Duguay Construction ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q13

Do I need a permit for a ground-level deck under 2 feet high in Dieppe NB?

A ground-level deck under 2 feet high in Dieppe may be exempt from a building permit, but only if it is freestanding and sits under 600 millimetres above finished grade. The critical factors are whether the deck is attached to the house and how far the deck surface sits above the surrounding ground, and you should always verify with the municipality before starting construction.

The New Brunswick Building Code, which Dieppe enforces through its building inspection department, uses the 600-millimetre threshold as the primary dividing line for permit requirements on decks. Two feet is approximately 610 millimetres, which actually puts your deck right at or slightly above that threshold. If your deck surface measures even a few centimetres above 600 millimetres from finished grade at any point, it crosses into permit-required territory. This measurement is taken from the lowest point of the adjacent finished grade to the top of the deck surface, so if your yard slopes and one side of the deck ends up higher than the other, the highest point determines whether you meet the exemption.

Even more importantly, the exemption for low decks typically applies only to freestanding structures. If your deck is attached to the house using a ledger board, a building permit is required regardless of the deck's height above grade. The reason for this distinction is that a ledger-mounted deck transfers loads into the house structure, creating structural dependencies that need to be verified through the permit and inspection process. An improperly attached ledger board is one of the leading causes of deck collapses across Canada, which is why the code treats attached and freestanding decks differently.

For a truly freestanding ground-level deck in Dieppe that sits below 600 millimetres, you are generally exempt from the building permit requirement. However, you are still bound by zoning setback rules. Even an exempt deck cannot be built within the required setback distances from your property lines, which are typically 1 to 3 metres in Dieppe's residential zones. You are also still responsible for ensuring the deck does not interfere with drainage patterns, lot grading, or utility easements on your property.

It is worth noting that building permit exemption does not mean you can ignore the building code entirely. The NB Building Code still governs how the deck is constructed, including the quality of materials, fastener requirements, and guard rails if the grade drops away on any side creating a fall height over 600 millimetres. If your ground-level deck sits on a flat yard and is only 300 or 400 millimetres high, guards are generally not required. But if the yard slopes sharply on one side, creating a drop of more than 600 millimetres from the deck surface to the ground below, guards are mandatory on that side regardless of the deck's height on the uphill side.

The safest course of action is to contact Dieppe's building inspection office before beginning work. A quick conversation with a building inspector can confirm whether your specific situation qualifies for the exemption,

sparing you the risk of fines that range from $500 to $5,000 for unpermitted construction, or the more serious consequence of being ordered to remove a completed deck that does not comply.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- R.e.j Construction ?
- Worry No More Handyman Services ?
- Larmondin Carpentry ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q14

How do I apply for a deck building permit in Fredericton New Brunswick?

You apply for a deck building permit in Fredericton by submitting an application to the city's Development Officer, along with a site plan, construction drawings, and the applicable fee. The process is straightforward but does require you to gather specific documentation before you visit or submit online.

The first step is to prepare a site plan showing your property boundaries, the location of your house, and the proposed position of the deck. This plan needs to clearly indicate the distances from the deck to all property lines, as Fredericton enforces setback requirements that typically range from 1 to 3 metres depending on your zoning designation. You will also need construction drawings that show the deck dimensions, footing depths, beam and joist sizes, post spacing, and railing details. These drawings do not necessarily need to be prepared by an engineer for a standard single-level residential deck, but they must demonstrate compliance with the New Brunswick Building Code, which adopts the National Building Code of Canada with NB-specific amendments.

The permit fee in Fredericton generally falls in the $100 to $300 range depending on the scope of the project. Any deck that is attached to the house or that sits more than 600 millimetres above finished grade requires a permit. This threshold is important because many homeowners assume that a relatively low deck is automatically exempt, but if it is ledger-mounted to the house structure, a permit is required regardless of height.

Fredericton's Development Officer reviews the application to confirm that your proposed deck meets zoning bylaws, including setbacks, lot coverage maximums, and height restrictions. Once the zoning review is satisfied, the

building permit portion is assessed against the structural requirements of the NB Building Code. Footing depth is a critical factor in Fredericton, where frost depth requirements call for footings to be set at a minimum of 1.2 metres below grade, consistent with southern New Brunswick standards. Your drawings should specify footing dimensions and reinforcement if applicable, and post-to-beam connections must be detailed.

Approval timelines in Fredericton typically run 2 to 4 weeks from submission, assuming the application is complete and no revisions are requested. Incomplete submissions are the most common cause of delays, so it is worth double-checking that your site plan accurately reflects current survey information and that your construction drawings include all required structural details.

Once the permit is issued, you are required to schedule inspections at three stages: the footing inspection before pouring concrete or backfilling around sonotubes, the framing inspection after the substructure and decking are in place but before railings and stairs are finished, and the final inspection once all work is complete including guards and handrails. Each inspection must be passed before proceeding to the next phase. Building without a permit in New Brunswick carries fines ranging from $500 to $5,000, and unpermitted structures can complicate future property sales and void homeowner insurance coverage for any incident related to the deck.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- Worry No More Handyman Services ?
- Hickory Dickory Decks Moncton ?
- Eastbound Homes ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q15

What is the NB building code frost depth requirement for deck footings?

Deck footings in New Brunswick must extend below the frost line, which ranges from approximately 1.2 metres (4 feet) to 1.8 metres (6 feet) depending on your specific location within the province. The most commonly referenced frost depth for the major urban centres of Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John is approximately 1.5 metres (5 feet), though local conditions and municipal requirements can push this figure higher or

lower.

The frost depth requirement exists to prevent frost heave, which occurs when moisture in the soil freezes and expands, pushing footings upward and causing the deck structure above to shift, crack, and potentially fail. New Brunswick's climate, with sustained sub-zero temperatures from December through March and significant ground frost penetration, makes this requirement essential rather than precautionary. A footing that does not reach below the frost line will inevitably move, and that movement transfers directly into your deck structure, causing uneven surfaces, separated connections, and in severe cases structural collapse.

New Brunswick adopts the National Building Code of Canada with provincial amendments, and the frost depth requirement falls under the foundation provisions in Part 9 for residential construction. The Code does not publish a single frost depth for the entire province because frost penetration varies with geography, elevation, snow cover, and soil type. Instead, it requires footings to extend below the depth of frost penetration for the specific building location. Municipal building departments maintain the authoritative frost depth figures for their jurisdictions. In Fredericton, the Development Officer typically requires a minimum of 1.5 metres. Moncton's Building Inspection Division enforces a similar depth. Saint John, with its coastal moderation from the Bay of Fundy, may allow slightly shallower footings in some areas, but 1.4 to 1.5 metres is standard. Northern New Brunswick communities like Bathurst, Edmundston, and Campbellton may require depths of 1.6 to 1.8 metres due to colder sustained winter temperatures.

The footing itself must be sized to distribute the deck load over sufficient soil area to prevent settling. A standard Sonotube footing of 10 to 12 inches in diameter is adequate for most residential decks, though load-bearing points on larger decks may require 16-inch diameter footings or engineered pad footings. The bottom of the footing should rest on undisturbed native soil, not on fill or organic material. If excavation encounters soft or unsuitable soil, you may need to dig deeper and place compacted granular fill beneath the footing, or switch to an engineered solution like helical screw piles that can be driven to competent bearing material regardless of depth.

Helical screw piles have become an increasingly popular alternative to poured concrete footings in New Brunswick precisely because they address frost depth concerns effectively. A screw pile is mechanically driven until it reaches the required torque value, which confirms it has engaged solid bearing soil well below the frost line. This approach works year-round, which is a significant advantage in a province where the traditional construction season is compressed by winter conditions.

When applying for a building permit, your cross-section drawings must clearly indicate the footing depth and demonstrate compliance with the local frost depth requirement. The footing inspection, which occurs before any framing work can proceed, specifically verifies that the hole depth meets or exceeds the required frost depth. Inspectors will measure from finished grade to the bottom of the excavation, so there is no room for shortcuts. If footings are found to be shallow during inspection, you will be required to deepen them before proceeding, adding

cost and delay to your project.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- R.e.j Construction ?
- Hickory Dickory Decks Moncton ?
- Larmondin Carpentry ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?

Q16

Do I need a building permit to build a deck in Moncton NB?

Yes, you almost certainly need a building permit to build a deck in Moncton. Under New Brunswick's building regulations, a permit is required for any deck that is attached to your house or that stands more than 600 millimetres (approximately 24 inches) above the adjacent finished grade. The only common exception is a freestanding, ground-level deck that sits entirely below that 24-inch threshold, and even then you should verify with Moncton's Building Inspection Division before starting work.

The permit application process in Moncton is handled through the Building Inspection Division at City Hall. You will need to submit several drawings with your application: a site plan showing the deck's position on your property including distances to property lines, a deck plan with dimensions and joist layout, a cross-section drawing showing footing depth and framing details, and railing details if guards are required. For complex or large decks, engineered drawings prepared by a licensed professional engineer may be required. The permit fee in Moncton runs between $100 and $300 depending on the project scope.

Setback requirements are a critical part of the permit review. In most Moncton residential zones, structures including decks must maintain a setback of typically 1 to 3 metres from property lines, though the exact distance varies by zone and property configuration. Your site plan must demonstrate compliance with these setbacks. If your proposed deck encroaches on a required setback, you would need to apply for a variance through the planning department, which is a separate process that adds time and is not guaranteed to be approved.

Once your application is submitted, expect an approval timeline of 2 to 4 weeks. During this period, the building inspector reviews your drawings for compliance with the National Building Code as adopted by New Brunswick, including structural adequacy, footing specifications, guard requirements, and snow load capacity. New Brunswick's snow load requirements range from 2.0 to 3.5 kPa depending on the specific region, and your deck framing must be designed to handle this in addition to normal live loads.

After permit approval, construction follows a specific inspection sequence. A footing inspection is required before you pour concrete or backfill around your footings. The inspector verifies that holes are dug to the required frost depth of approximately 1.5 metres in the Moncton area and that footing dimensions match your approved drawings. After framing is complete and before decking is installed, some inspectors will want to see the joist and beam connections. A final inspection occurs once the deck is fully complete, including railings, stairs, and any electrical work.

If your deck includes any electrical components such as outlets, lighting fixtures, or hot tub wiring, a separate electrical permit is required regardless of whether a building permit is needed for the structure. Any electrical outlet

within 1.5 metres of the deck must have GFCI protection.

Building without a permit in Moncton carries serious consequences. The city can issue fines, order work to stop, or require removal of the structure. Beyond municipal enforcement, an unpermitted deck creates problems that follow you for years. Your homeowner's insurance may not cover injuries or damage related to an unpermitted structure. When you sell your home, the buyer's home inspector will flag the deck, and buyers or their lawyers will demand proof of permits. The absence of a permit can result in price reductions of thousands of dollars or even kill a sale entirely. Obtaining a permit after the fact is possible but typically costs more and may require opening up finished work for inspection.

Find a Deck Building Contractor

New Brunswick Decks connects you with experienced contractors through the https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com:

- R.e.j Construction ?
- Eastbound Homes ?
- Hickory Dickory Decks Moncton ?

View all fencing-decks contractors ?
